

Frequently Asked Questions about Tacoma Smelter Plume

New state law – Free Soil Safety Program for schools & childcares

Working together to protect children from area-wide soil contamination

The Soil Safety Program partners are:

- **Washington Department of Ecology, Toxics Cleanup Program**
- **Public Health - Seattle & King County**
- **Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department**
- **Washington Department of Social and Health Services**
- **Washington Department of Health**
- **Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction**
- **Washington Childcare Resource & Referral Network**

Please see the last page of this handout for where you can learn more about the Soil Safety Program.

Para obtener información acerca del proyecto del Tacoma Smelter Plume, visite al sitio Web: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm. Si necesita más información en español, favor de comunicarse con el Sr. Gus Ordonez al (360) 407-6619.

За информацией о Проекте ликвидации выбросов медеплавильного завода Такомы посетите вебсайт: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm. Если вам нужна дополнительная информация на русском языке, пожалуйста, звоните Александру Клементьеву в отдел здравоохранения Такомы и округа Пиэрс по телефону (253) 798-3528.

Q: What is the Soil Safety Program?

A: For almost 100 years, the Asarco company had a copper smelter in Tacoma. Air pollution from the smelter settled on parts of King, Pierce, Kitsap, and Thurston counties. Arsenic and lead are still in the soil. Some child play areas may have arsenic and lead in amounts that are a health concern.

In 2005, the legislature passed a law to keep children safe from polluted soil. The Soil Safety Program is one result of this new law. If you would like to know more about the law, see the last page of this handout.

The Soil Safety Program:

- Assists schools and childcares in providing a safer and healthier setting for children.
- Reduces children's contact with smelter arsenic and lead – especially young children.
- Identifies child play areas where children come in contact with polluted soil.
- Provides:
 - ✓ Free soil testing at all schools and childcares in the Soil Safety Program service area (please see map on page 3).
 - ✓ Free design assistance, labor and materials to put soil safety actions in place – at schools and childcares with arsenic and lead above state standards.



The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) pays for and manages the program as part of the Tacoma Smelter Plume project. Public Health – Seattle & King County and the Tacoma – Pierce County Health Department (your local health departments) are key partners in carrying out the program because of their expertise and knowledge of the local community. Another important partner in protecting children is you – a school or childcare where children learn and play.

Q: Is my school or childcare in the Soil Safety Program service area?

A: If you received this handout from Ecology or your local health department, you are probably in the service area. (Please see page 3 for a service area map.)

Schools and childcares in the service area generally have a greater potential for smelter arsenic or lead above state standards. Although arsenic and lead are health concerns in even low amounts, the higher the amount the greater the health concern.

Q: Why should I care about arsenic and lead?

A: Arsenic and lead cause several health problems in people. Whether someone is affected depends on the amount of arsenic and lead taken into his or her body over time. Young children are more vulnerable because they tend to put dirty fingers and toys into their mouths. Their hands and toys may have arsenic and lead on them.

Scientists have linked arsenic to a variety of health problems including heart disease, diabetes, and cancer of the bladder, lung, skin, kidney, liver, and prostate. Lead can cause behavioral problems, permanent learning difficulties, and reduced physical growth.

For more information on health effects of arsenic and lead, please contact:

Jim White, Washington Department of Health Toxicologist

Phone 360-236-3192

E-mail Jim.W.White@doh.wa.gov

Website <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/>

Please visit Ecology's Tacoma Smelter Plume website for an arsenic and lead information sheet developed just for the Soil Safety Program:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm

You may order a copy of the arsenic and lead information sheet by calling 360-407-6262.

You can also find arsenic and lead information on your local health department websites:

Public Health – Seattle & King County:

<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/tsp/arseniclead.htm>

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department:

<http://tpchd.org/dirtalert>



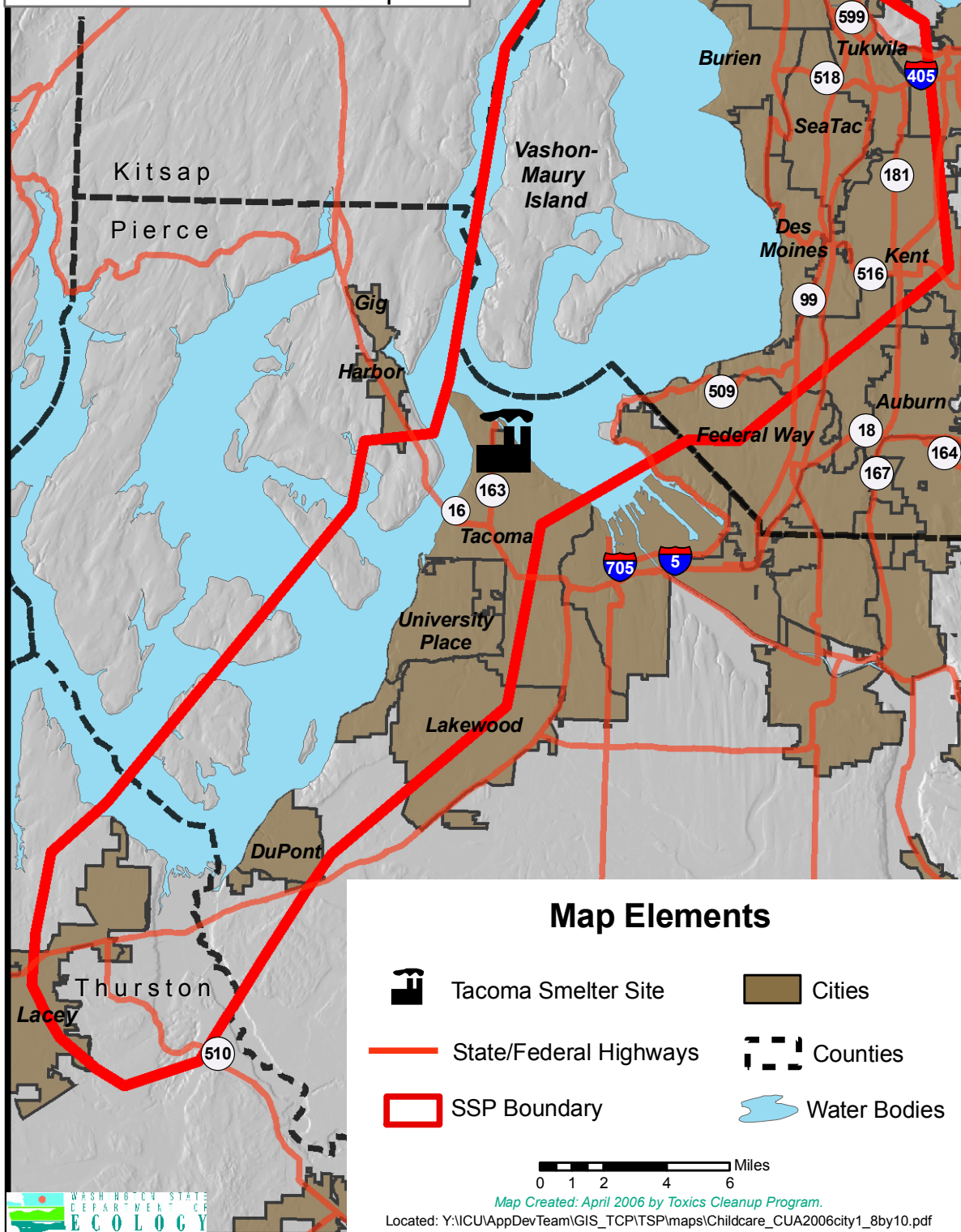


Soil Safety Program Service Area

Reference Note:

See the back of this map for a listing of school districts, private schools and zip codes that are in the Service Area.

For more information, visit the website or call the phone number listed on the back of this map.



Zip Code	Post Office
98001	Auburn
98003	Federal Way
98023	Federal Way
98031	Kent
98032	Kent
98055	Renton
98070	Vashon
98106	Seattle
98108	Seattle
98116	Seattle
98118	Seattle
98126	Seattle
98134	Seattle
98136	Seattle
98168	Seattle
98178	Seattle
98303	Anderson Island
98327	Dupont
98332	Gig Harbor
98333	Fox Island
98335	Gig Harbor
98359	Olalla
98366	Port Orchard
98367	Port Orchard
98388	Steilacoom
98402	Tacoma
98403	Tacoma
98405	Tacoma
98406	Tacoma
98407	Tacoma
98409	Tacoma
98416	Tacoma
98421	Tacoma
98422	Tacoma
98433	Tacoma
98498	Lakewood
98499	Lakewood
98503	Lacey
98513	Olympia
98516	Olympia
98032*	Kent
98146*	Seattle
98148*	Seattle
98158*	SeaTac
98166*	Seattle
98188*	Seattle
98198*	Seattle
98465*	Tacoma
98466*	Tacoma
98467*	University Place

Private Schools	
Annie Wright School	Tacoma
Burien SDA School	Seattle
Charles Wright Academy	Tacoma
Covenant High School	Tacoma
Des Moines Creek School	Des Moines
Earlington Elementary School	Seattle
Evergreen Lutheran High School	Des Moines
Explorer West	Seattle
Faith Lutheran School	Lacey
Family Academy/Academy NW	Seattle
Federal Way Christian Academy	Federal Way
Freedom School	Seattle
Glendale Lutheran School	Burien
Hamlin Robinson School	Seattle
Harbor Christian High School	Gig Harbor
Heritage Christian School	Tacoma
Holy Family School	Lacey
Holy Rosary Elementary	Seattle
Holy Trinity Lutheran School	Des Moines
Hope Lutheran School	Seattle
JF Kennedy Memorial High School	Seattle
Kent View Christian School	Kent
Lakewood Lutheran School	Lakewood
Learning Way School	Seattle
Lighthouse Christian School	Gig Harbor
Normandy Park Academy	Seattle
Our Lady of Guadalupe School	Seattle
Seabury School	Tacoma
SeaTac Christian Academy	SeaTac
Seattle Christian School	Seattle
Seattle Lutheran High School	Seattle
Shorewood Christian School	Seattle
St. Charles Borromeo School	Tacoma
St. Christopher Academy	Seattle
St. Patrick School	Tacoma
St. Vincent De Paul School	Federal Way
Steilacoom Classical Academy	Steilacoom
West Seattle Christian School	Seattle
West Seattle Montessori School	Seattle
Westside School	Seattle
Public School Districts	
Clover Park	Seattle
Federal Way	Steilacoom
Highline*	Tacoma
Kent	Tukwila*
North Thurston	University Place*
Peninsula	Vashon Island*
Renton	

A * indicates completely in service area; others partially overlap service area.

Website: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm

Please contact Ecology's Soil Safety Program Coordinator: Mark Kastenbaum

Phone: 360-407-6262 E-mail: MKAS461@ecy.wa.gov

Q: Am I required to participate in the Soil Safety Program?

A: Yes. Schools and childcares within the Soil Safety Program service area are required to participate. Schools and childcares within the service area have a greater potential for polluted soil than those outside the service area. Schools include both public and private schools. Childcares include both childcare centers and home childcares. The program also includes preschools and Head Start programs, and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) facilities.

By law, schools and childcares within the service area must provide property access for soil testing. If test results are above state standards, Ecology will offer free design assistance, labor and materials for soil safety actions. See page 8 for more about soil safety actions and test results.

This is a free program to assist you in creating a safer and healthier setting for children in your care. You are encouraged to use this free program while funding and assistance are available.

Q: What funding and resources are available?

A: We believe we have enough funding for soil testing and soil safety actions at schools and childcares in the service area. We expect to offer free testing and soil safety actions at least through December 2009.

For more details about funding and resources set aside for the program, please read *Soil Safety Program – Facts about Funding and Resources*. See the last page of this handout for where to get a copy of the fact sheet.

Q: Who will test my soil?

A: Your local health department will evaluate your child play areas and, if needed, test your soil. These services will be free.

This handout should have arrived with a letter from your local health department asking permission to come and test soil in your play areas. Your letter should include a soil testing permission form. To receive a free evaluation and soil testing, you must complete and return the form to your local health department. Once the health department receives your form, they will call you to set up a convenient time to test your play area soils.



Q: What if the health department already tested my soil for smelter arsenic and lead?

A: If the health department or Ecology's contractor has already sampled your soil for smelter arsenic and lead, please call the health department and let them know you received the cover letter and form by mistake. If the health department or Ecology's contractor has already tested your soil and the levels are of concern, Ecology will contact you in late spring or early summer 2006 to assist you with soil safety actions.

Q: When will the health department test my soil?

A: The Soil Safety Program service area is big – almost 315 square miles. We estimate it will take four years to serve all the schools and childcares in the area. Described below are the local health departments' timelines for testing soil at schools and childcares.

King County Service Area

The King County part of the service area currently has 123 public and private schools, and over 380 childcares.

Schools: Public Health – Seattle & King County will offer soil testing to all public and private schools in the King County service area in April – May 2006. Soil testing will take several months, lasting through the summer.

Childcares: In late summer 2006, Public Health – Seattle & King County will begin offering soil testing to childcares. The table below lists where and when the health department will generally offer soil testing.

<u>General Location of Childcares</u>	<u>General Start Time for Childcares</u>
Vashon-Maury Island	Summer 2006
Federal Way/Auburn	Fall 2006
DesMoines/Kent	Spring 2007
Normandy Park/Burien/SeaTac/Tukwila	Fall 2007
Seattle	Spring 2008



Pierce County Service Area

The Pierce County part of the service area currently has 65 public and private schools, and over 170 childcares.

Schools: The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will offer soil testing to all public and private schools in the Pierce County service area in April – May 2006. Soil testing will take several months, lasting through the summer.

Childcares: In late winter 2007, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will begin offering soil testing to childcares. The table below shows general locations and start times for soil testing.

<u>General Location of Childcares</u>	<u>General Start Time for Childcares</u>
North Tacoma, N.E. Tacoma	Winter 2007 – Spring 2007
West Tacoma	Summer 2007
University Place	Fall 2007
Lakewood, Steilacoom	Winter 2008
Gig Harbor	Spring 2008
Fort Lewis	Summer 2008

Q: What can I do to create a healthier environment for children while I am waiting to get my play area soil tested?

A: Please contact your local health department for information about what you can do while waiting to get your soil tested. See contact information for Public Health – Seattle & King County and Tacoma – Pierce County Health Department on the last page of this handout.

Q: How will Ecology help me with soil safety actions?

A: As soon as we have your test results, Ecology will see if they meet state standards. If your soil test results don't meet state standards (see page 10), Ecology will contact you to set up a meeting. Not meeting the arsenic and/or lead standards means there is a problem that needs attention. Ecology will explain the test results, and talk about different soil safety actions that will help protect you and the children in your care. Together, we will make a Soil Safety Action Plan for you. Ecology and the health departments will then provide the funding, labor and/or educational resources to carry out these actions.



Q: What are soil safety actions?

A: Soil safety actions are actions we can take to protect children from soil arsenic and lead. These actions also help protect adults working at schools and childcares. You are probably already taking actions that are positive and helpful. Many soil safety actions are common sense and easy to do – and have health benefits beyond reducing contact with arsenic and lead.

Some simple soil safety actions you can take now include:

- Keep children from putting dirt in their mouths
- Wash hands and faces after playing outside and before eating
- Keep dirt outside by using a door mat
- Wash children's toys and pacifiers often

Other soil safety actions, which take time to design and plan, include:

- Cover soil with sod or wood chips, or other material approved for child play areas
- Mix the soil
- Remove the soil and take to a landfill

Ecology will work with you to select the actions best suited for your school or childcare.

Q: What will my test results show?

A: Soil testing will provide a general picture of soil arsenic and lead in your play areas. The health department will take about eight samples of soil from each play area at your school or childcare. Ecology will average the results, and look at the maximum amount of arsenic and lead. Ecology will then compare the results with state standards. The table below lists the arsenic and lead amounts Ecology will use to determine if a school or childcare needs a Soil Safety Action Plan.

Amounts of arsenic and lead and when Soil Safety Action Plan is needed

Measure	Arsenic in parts per million (ppm)		Lead in parts per million (ppm)	
Average of Soil Test Results	20 ppm or less	Over 20 ppm	250 ppm or less	Over 250 ppm
Maximum Amount Found	40 ppm or less	Over 40 ppm	500 ppm or less	Over 500 ppm
Will schools and childcares need a Soil Safety Action Plan?	No – Some limited resources and advice on actions will be provided upon request	Yes – Ecology and your local health department will provide resources for a Soil Safety Action Plan	No – Some limited resources and advice on actions will be provided upon request	Yes – Ecology and your local health department will provide resources for a Soil Safety Action Plan



Once you have the test results, you can make an informed decision on what to do next. If the average or maximum amounts of arsenic or lead in your soil don't meet state standards, Ecology will work with you to develop a Soil Safety Action Plan for your school or childcare.

The Soil Safety Program Design report describes the reasoning behind the state standards and amounts chosen for the program. You can get a copy of the report from Ecology's Tacoma Smelter Plume website or by calling Ecology's Soil Safety Program Coordinator listed on the last page of this handout.

Q: What must schools and childcares do?

A: Here is what you have to do as an important partner in the Soil Safety Program:

Soil Testing – All schools and childcares must have their soil tested.

- ☐ **Give permission for local health department staff to take soil from your play areas by signing a property access form.**
- ☐ **Provide a simple drawing of your property and buildings, if you have one.**
- ☐ **Answer questions about the history and use of your property, including where children play.**
- ☐ **Receive your soil test results and learn what they mean.** If the soil test results show low amounts of arsenic and lead in your play areas, you will receive a letter describing your test results and what they mean, and a certificate of appreciation and window decal for taking part in the program. No other action is required of schools and childcares with low amounts of arsenic and lead.

Your local health department and Ecology staff will be available to answer your questions about soil test results. Ecology and your local health department can also provide advice if you want to use your own funding to put actions in place.

Soil Safety Action Plan – Schools and childcares with arsenic and lead above state standards will be highly encouraged to put a Soil Safety Action Plan in place. The state law requires schools and childcares with arsenic and lead above state standards to put a Soil Safety Action Plan in place, or notify parents and families in writing of the test results. To take advantage of free soil safety action design assistance, labor and materials, you will need to:

- ☐ **Work with Ecology to create a Soil Safety Action Plan for your school or childcare.** You will need to sign a Soil Safety Action Plan agreement to reserve free resources. The plan will be designed just for your setting and situation, and will generally have two parts:



- Actions such as hand washing, using doormats, and other steps to make a safer and healthier setting for children. A local health department expert will offer fun and creative tools you can use to engage children in healthy behaviors.
- Actions that require design and planning such as covering or removing polluted soil, or redesigning play areas. Ecology will work with administrators, owners, and/or operators to identify the best approach - recognizing the need to coordinate work with other priorities at your school or childcare.

☐ **Maintain the soil safety actions.** Ecology and your local health department can help get soil safety actions started – but you will need to make sure they continue into the future. Upkeep of soil safety actions such as hand washing, landscaping, and play area groundcovers will be your responsibility. Ecology will work with you to estimate maintenance costs before asking for your signature on the Soil Safety Action Plan agreement.

☐ **Post a certificate that praises your participation in the program and describes your Soil Safety Action Plan.**

☐ **Allow Ecology staff to visit your school or childcare occasionally, to ensure soil safety actions are still working well for your school or childcare.**

In addition to the above items, we hope schools and childcares will be willing to give us feedback on program services and materials. We have provided a grant to the Washington Child Care Resource and Referral Network to survey childcares occasionally to learn how we can improve the program.

We also invite you to call or email the Soil Safety Program Coordinator with any questions, ideas or suggestions you may have. Please see the next page for how to reach the coordinator and where to learn more about the Soil Safety Program.

Thank you!

We look forward to working with you to make schools and childcares a healthier and safer place for children.



Where to Learn More about the Soil Safety Program

Please contact Washington State Department of Ecology for general program information.

Ecology's website contains program details:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/tacoma_smelter/ts_hp.htm

Ecology's Safety Program Coordinator is ready to answer your questions:

Mark Kastenbaum

Washington Department of Ecology, Toxics Cleanup Program

PO Box 47775

Olympia, WA 98504-7775

Phone 360-407-6262

E-mail Mkas461@ecy.wa.gov

TTY 711, or 1-800-833-6388

You are encouraged to contact your local health department for soil testing information.

Sid Forman

Public Health – Seattle & King County

999 3rd Avenue, Suite 1200, Seattle, WA 98104

Phone 206-205-8070

E-mail Sid.Forman@METROK.GOV

TTY 711

Glenn Rollins

Tacoma – Pierce County Health Department

3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98148-6813

Phone 253-798-3503

E-mail GRollins@tpchd.org

TDD 253-798-6050

The Washington State Childcare Resource and Referral Network has a state public participation grant to assist childcares in understanding and participating in the Soil Safety Program. Childcares are encouraged to contact them with questions.

Ryan Pricco

Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network

917 Pacific Avenue South, Suite 600

Tacoma, WA 98402

Phone 253-383-1735, ext. 26

E-mail ryan@childcarenet.org

Website <http://www.childcarenet.org/>

